

**AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION**

Please amend paragraph 0001 as follows:

[0001] This application is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/915,454, filed on July 27, 2001, now U.S. Patent No. 6,688,632, issued on February 10, 2004, the disclosure of which is hereby incorporated by reference thereto in its entirety, and the priority of which is hereby claimed under 35 U.S.C. §120.

After paragraph 0043, please add new paragraph 0043.1 as follows:

[0043.1] In the various embodiments of the invention in which a cutout is provided, it can be seen in the aforementioned exemplary drawings that at least a portion of the data exchange label is in vertical alignment with the cutout while the bottom surface layer is in a horizontal position. Further, at least a portion of the data exchange label is in alignment with the cutout, perpendicularly with respect to at least a portion of the outer peripheral surface of the ski, to expose the data exchange label through the cutout to a device for reading the data exchange label.